

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

- (1) Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 4 with the following amended paragraph:

For example, a supplier of welding consumables can maintain an inventory of welding consumables at a customer location (*e.g.*, ownership of welding consumables remains with supplier—Vendor Managed Inventory (VMI)). At least in part based upon information obtained from the consumable(s) monitor 215 through the welder 210, the remote system (*e.g.*, supplier's computer system) can allocate and/or charge the customer for welding consumable(s) once they [[have]] are used by the customer. This can result in decreased costs to the customer associated with maintaining inventory since the customer is not charged for the welding consumable(s) until the consumable(s) has been used. Further, the customer can delegate to the supplier responsibility for maintaining inventory of welding consumable(s) at the customer location, thus reducing the customer's costs associated with materials management.

- (2) Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 20, line 16 with the following amended paragraph

Fig. 9 illustrates a methodology 900 for managing welding consumable(s) in accordance with an aspect of the present invention. At 910, information regarding consumable(s) usage is received. At 920, a customer is invoiced for consumable(s) usage. For example, a supplier of welding consumable(s) can maintain an inventory of welding consumables at a customer location (*e.g.*, ownership of welding consumable(s) remains with supplier). At least in part based upon information received regarding consumable(s) usage, the supplier can allocate and/or charge the customer for welding consumable(s) once they have been used by the customer. This can result in a decrease in costs to the customer associated with maintaining inventory since the customer is not charged for the welding consumable(s) until they have been used. Further, the customer can delegate to the supplier responsibility for maintaining inventory of welding consumable(s) at the customer location, thus reducing the customer's costs associated with materials management.